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# Farm Broadcasters Letter



CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

Letter No. 2305

March 26, 1987

## SALES TO USSR

Private exporters reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture sales to the USSR of 200,000 metric tons of corn for delivery during the 1986-87 marketing year, under the fourth year of the Long Term Grain Supply Agreement. Sales of corn to the USSR during the fourth year of the agreement now total just over 2½ million tons. Sales of wheat and corn to the USSR for delivery during the third year of the agreement totaled nearly 7 million tons, of which wheat was 152,600 tons, and corn was 6,808,000 tons. In addition, sales of soybeans totaled just over 1½ million tons.

## WORLD FOOD OUTPUT LAGS

World food production in 1986 rose only about 1 percent from a year earlier, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The output increased in the developing countries and in countries with central planning, but declined in the developed countries. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, this was primarily in response to surplus stocks and low prices. The world's population growth outpaced the food production, causing the per capita output to decline nearly 2 percent. Only the centrally planned country group showed an increase in per capital food output. The drought in South America pulled per capita production down 1 percent in the developing countries.

## FOOD AID NEEDS DECLINES

Within the developing world, total food aid needs across 69 of the least developed countries subsided in 1986/87, as needs declined in many countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, grain production in Sub-Saharan Africa was record high in 1986, with gains in almost every country from Mauritania to Zimbabwe. Food needs in Central America rose, worsened by drought--reduced crops and civil strife.

## A DOLLAR IS STILL A DOLLAR

The economic growth prospects for the developing countries are improving for U.S. exports. However, the financing of their debts continues to absorb a significant portion of expenditures, and currencies of many developing countries have not appreciated against the dollar like those of some industrialized countries, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. As a result, U.S. exports are not significantly more price-attractive to many developing countries.

# WHEAT FOR FOOD AT NEW HIGH

The record wheat production in 1986/87 is pushing global wheat consumption for food to a new high, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The green revolution for wheat has enhanced food production in many developing countries. Higher yielding varieties have been particularly effective where spring wheat is a common crop. However, many developing countries in tropical climates, such as Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia and Central America are not well adapted for wheat production, and improved varieties are not the answer to rising food needs.

# DECLINE IN MEXICO'S WHEAT PRODUCTION

Mexico's 1987/88 wheat production is forecast to be 4 million tons, 11 percent below last year's record 4½ million ton crop, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The decline is attributed primarily to a sharp reduction in planted area due to persistent disease problems. And despite the expected decline in the harvest, wheat production remains well above the annual average of 2 million 300 thousand tons produced in the late 1970's.

# HIGH CALORIES IN AMERICA

Europeans and Americans are consuming about 3,300 calories daily, with around 40 percent coming from foods of animal origin, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Japanese consume about 2,600 calories daily, with about 22 percent coming from animal products. The world wide per capita meat consumption changed little in 1986 as output matched population gains. The per capita beef consumption is forecast to decline in 1987, while per capita poultry and pork output and consumption are expected to rise. As incomes improve in low and middle-income countries, animal products replace grain and vegetable products in diets.

# UPDATE ON DAIRY TERMINATION PROGRAM

As a result of the Dairy Termination Program, an estimated 12,600 head of dairy cattle were slaughtered in federally-inspected plants during the week ending March 6, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The cumulative total of cattle slaughtered under the program from April 1 through March 6 is an estimated 1,023,600 head.

# EXPORT ENHANCEMENT REMINDER

The Foreign Agricultural Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture provides a 24-hour telephone service with daily updates on activity under the Export Enhancement Program. The telephone number is (202) 447-2043. The message is updated daily at 4 p.m. Eastern time.

# FOOD PRICES ROSE IN 1986

Food prices, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, rose 3.2 percent in 1986, slightly more than the 2.3 percent rise in 1985, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. But the increase nearly equaled the average 3 percent increase since 1981 when there was a sharp slowing in the rate of inflation. But the rise in retail prices was held down in 1986 because plentiful food supplies pushed down the prices farmers received for commodities for the second year. The farm value of foods declined 1.3 percent, reflecting large supplies, a decline in agricultural exports, and the 1985 farm act that set lower support prices for grains.



FROM OUR  
TELEVISION  
SERVICE

**TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS...**Recent export-assistance programs and a strong worldwide demand for U.S. breeding livestock have generated a large number of requests for information on the transport of livestock for export. Bill Craig with USDA's Office of Transportation talks about transportation options. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (156)

**PREPARING CATTLE FOR EXPORT...**Export cattle encounter an exceptional amount of stress during handling and transporting to various export destinations. Karl Hoke with USDA's Office of Transportation talks about recommendations for the care and handling of cattle prior to export. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (157)

**STORAGE MOLD IN GRAIN...**Barry Jacobsen, Univ. of Illinois, talks about the effects of warm weather on bins of stored grain and precautions farmers should take to ensure grain quality during warm weather. Gary Beaumont interviews. (158)

**SNOW FENCE...**David Sturges with USDA's Forest Service focuses on problems associated with drifting snow and describes research work being conducted with various snow management projects such as snow fences to aid farmers facing inclement weather conditions. Vic Powell interviews. (159)

**AGRICULTURE'S FINANCIAL PROFILE...**USDA economist Dave Banker focuses on the results of a survey recently taken to determine the farm sector's overall financial performance, including cash flow and financial stress. Vic Powell interviews. (160)

FROM OUR RADIO  
SERVICE

**AGRICULTURE USA #1556...**(Weekly 13½ min documentary) Computers are beginning to play a major role in farming. On this edition of AGRICULTURE USA, Gary Crawford talks with experts who are attempting to provide farmers with assistance through the media of computer programs and video laser discs.

**AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1545...**(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; USDA proposes new insect levels in grain shipments; Farmer suicide study; Selling farm products direct; Role of the ag. trade officer.

**CONSUMER TIME #1038...**(Weekly reel of 2½-3 min features) Buying plants for spring; Tax deductions and the new tax law; Calorie counting; Coffee in the morning; 1987 - A good year for the gypsy moth.

**USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...**Tues, Apr. 14, Weekly weather and crop report; Middle East and North Africa outlook report; Wed, Apr. 15, Cotton and wool outlook report; Thurs, Apr. 16, Floriculture crops and milk production report; World tobacco situation report; World food needs and availabilities update; Fri, Apr. 17, Agricultural outlook report. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

OFF MIKE

Ray Williams, a member of our USDA radio tape duplication and mailing crew, died of a heart attack at his home, March 25. He was 54 ... Bob Given (KGNC, Amarillo, TX) reports that Karr Ingham has returned to KGNC. He had been at the station three years, then left about a year ago to work at KFDA-TV in Amarillo. Bob says it's good to have him back and adds, "As is true with 98% of farm broadcasters, he looks a lot better on radio!" Bob said it, not me ... Earlier we received a nice note from Gary Stewart (Northwest Ag News Net, Seattle, WA) who is the program chairman for the Western NAFB Regional Meeting in Seattle. Seems Gary took to heart a comment we had made in an earlier Farm Broadcaster Letter about our looking forward to the joys of a salmon dinner. Gary says one is planned. Oh boy! ... We also received info for the Southeast NAFB Regional Meeting from Dan Gordon (Tennessee Agrinet, Nashville, TN). It's set for May 29-31 in Gatlinburg, TN. One of the highlights, of course, will be the famous (infamous?) Jim Graham Barnyard Golf Classic and an

Farm Broadcasters Letter  
Radio and Television, Rm. 410-A  
Office of Information, OGPB  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D.C. 20250

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aerial tram ride. (The way some farm broadcasters hit the ball, they'll need the tram ride to find their errant shots ... One of our carpoolers works for Farmers Home Administration. She insists the following was attached to a payment check sent to FmHA: "I can tell you honestly that, except for a miracle that happened, I could not give you this check. The wolf that comes to my door nowadays just had pups in the kitchen. I SOLD THEM AND HERE IS THE MONEY!" ... If you're curious, this new format is to help the USDA mail unit use their automatic postage metering equipment on our self-mailer. They finally told us of their jamming problem after sending out the letter in envelopes the last three weeks.

  
JAMES L. JOHNSON, Chief  
Radio and Television Division